



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Information Technology

Date December 13, 2012

To: The Honorable Betsy Hodges, Chair, Ways and Means Committee

Subject: Wireless Community Accounts

Recommendation: Approve two applications for free Wireless Community accounts
1) Holland High Rise in partnership with Logan Park Neighborhood Association and Volunteers of America
2) Center for Victims of Professional Abuse

Prepared by Elise Ebhardt, Interagency Coordinator, 612-673-2026

Submitted by Otto Doll _____, 673-3633
Chief Information Officer

Approved by Paul Aasen _____
City Coordinator

Presenter in Committee Otto Doll

Policy Review Group X Not Applicable

Permanent Review Committee (PRC) X Not Applicable

Prior Related Directives:

Financial Impact: None.

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

- X No financial impact (If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Other financial impact (Explain):
- X Request provided to department's finance contact prior to the Committee Coordinator

Background/Supporting Information

In its continuing efforts to make Minneapolis a wireless city that bridges the digital divide, the City of Minneapolis continues to accept applications for “Wireless Community” accounts, which are free wireless Internet accounts intended for non-profit organizations that provide free computer access to the public. There are a total of 100 accounts available as part of the community benefits agreement of the Wireless Minneapolis contract with U.S. Internet Wireless. In 2009, staff completed two rounds of applications however accounts still remain for distribution.

The City's Information Technology (IT) Department has two new requests for use of the free accounts:

- 1) Holland High Rise, 1717 Washington Street Northeast to provide Internet access in the community room as part of a digital inclusion program with Logan Park Neighborhood Association and Volunteers of America. A Logan Park neighborhood activist is leading a pilot program to provide computers, Internet, and training for public housing and Logan Park residents, and to encourage community engagement using the community room space at the public housing facility. Volunteers of America is a non-profit providing social services for residents at the Holland High Rise.
- 2) The Center for Victims of Professional Abuse to provide computer and Internet access to residents in a temporary housing unit in Minneapolis. The housing unit is located west of Hennepin, north of Lake Street, within the 55405 zip code. The specific address of the housing unit is private due to the nature of the program (safe housing). The unit is donated rental space used as temporary safe housing for disabled residents who are in need of shelter while their rental properties are brought up to housing code. Typical length of stay ranges from 3-4 days, up to a maximum of 60 days. The computer and Internet in the housing unit is provided to residents for Internet access during their stay. The program also supports individuals in getting their GEDs via the Internet.

Both programs meet the eligibility criteria established for the program:

Must be non-profits located in the city of Minneapolis, and that:

- Provide public computer access (“community technology centers”)
- Provide technology literacy training, and/or
- Provide technology support for underserved communities

Groups eligible to apply for Wireless Community accounts:

- 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations located in Minneapolis and serving Minneapolis residents
- Nonprofits that are not 501(c)3 designated, but who have a fiscal agent
- Neighborhood, community-based, and faith-based associations or groups

Request for Approval

IT requests City Council approval of two applications for Wireless Community accounts:

- 1) Holland High Rise, and
- 2) Center for Victims of Professional Abuse